

Crises Hurt Arms Curb Efforts

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A casualty of the current tensions over Viet-Nam and the Dominican Republic may be the loss of the last chance to block the rapid and dangerous spread of nuclear weapons.

The United States believes the next few months may be crucial in reaching next-step agreements with Moscow, following up the 1963 partial test-ban treaty, high officials said.

But Soviet disarmament negotiator Semyon Tsarapkin and William C. Foster, Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, are scarcely meeting, although both are here for the continuing 114-nation disarmament commission.

Some \$200 million of American research on keeping track of underground blasts has advanced the detection art to a point where a little hard negotiating could bridge the gap to a comprehensive ban on all nuclear weapons tests, the experts say.

India hinted strongly here that unless there is agreement soon on nuclear weapons control, New Delhi will feel

ment. Peking also has proposed such a summit.

forced to develop its own to counter Peking's atomic arsenal. This feeling has undoubtedly intensified in the value of China's second test.

Indian diplomats deny published reports that India has secretly begun this development already. Sweden, another country with obvious nuclear capability, continues to renounce these weapons.

But Swedish disarmament delegate Alvu Myrdal said yesterday that "so much progress has now been made . . . that the requirements for control (of underground testing) can be reduced to such levels where an agreement should be within easy reach."

Unless the nuclear giants are willing to curb themselves by halting all nuclear testing and stopping production of fissionable material for military use, she said, the smaller cannot be expected to renounce access to these weapons.

Canada and Egypt have made similar statements on this.

The United States has permitted Soviet scientists to inspect its 200-mile-wide Montana array of underground blast-recording devices. Wash-

ington is spending \$5 million a month on improving the art of detecting and identifying such explosions.

A world-wide system of equipment will zero in on Operation Longshot, an explosion in the Aleutian Islands next fall calculated to convince the Soviet Union of the slim distinctions between small earthquakes and the type of nuclear tests that the United States says must be checked by inspection.

The Russians once said they would settle for two to three such inspections on their territory. But they withdrew the offer just as the United States appeared ready to come down from its demand from seven inspections.

With the new gadgets, American scientists can detect any underground blast down almost to the size of a giant firecracker. Furthermore, they have a pretty strong score on identifying the nature of the blast.

But the great problem of nuclear China remains, even if Moscow-Washington relations get back on the track.

Algerian Ambassador Tewfik Bouattoura recently repeated the Cairo nonaligned conference call for a world summit parley on disarmament.

The United States has not yet rejected this proposal, or French President de Gaulle's parallel call for a nuclear summit to be attended by the Soviet Union, Britain, France, the United States and China. On the other hand, Peking has not indicated any serious liking for it, outside of propaganda. The Chinese refuse to discuss it at Warsaw meetings with American officials.

Meanwhile, some authorities on world communism believe that Peking may be giving atomic weapons to Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia and North Korea within five years.